



VIC Newsletter



*A very Merry Christmas
from everyone at VIC*

Lottery backs project to remember the fallen

OUR project to commemorate and record all the fallen from Rossendale has been give a £10,000 boost from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

As part of Operation War Graves 100, a project being led by VIC, the stories of those who fought in the First World War will be captured for generations to come and their final resting places will be restored.

Next August will be the 100th anniversary of Britain declaring war on Germany.

Leading the project is VIC volunteer admin assistant Peter Webster, **pictured**. He said: "The project is starting in Bacup Cemetery and we have already carried out an assessment and we were surprised at how many veterans' graves had missing headstones.

"We will be working with



Rossendale Council to try to identify any living relatives to get permission to mark the graves properly and we are working with a local stonemason, Chiselhursts, who is giving advice on stone cleaning and replacement headstones.

"We have been working with Wendy Lord, from Bacup Natural History

Society. She has written a book on the fallen who are remembered in Bacup Cemetery 'Where Heroes Rest', which has provided us with a lot of information and she is also supporting the project."

Wendy said: "I think it is about time these young men, who are buried up there, received proper recognition.

"When I did the research for my book I learnt about their stories and I feel as if I got to know them. It is long overdue. I am sure they would be happy to know that they had not been forgotten."

VIC will be linking with community groups and schools to deliver talks about the true stories of those who fought in the First World War and what happened to those who returned home.

As part of the project, a

'how to' guide is to be compiled with templates, hints and tips so others can carry out similar work. This will also be linked into the VIC website.

Work on the first year's project should be completed by August, when it is planned to hold a pledge day. The original Bacup Role of Honour list will be on display and VIC will renew its pledge to veterans to help them to return, belong and prosper.

Peter added: "We are also carrying out a project to finish work on the Memorial Gardens in Whitworth at the same time.

"We will be working with the probation service on both schemes and we plan to have working parties switching between the two projects to learn new skills also also meet and work with a wide range of VIC volunteers."

**VIC is
on the
move**

IN JANUARY we will be settling into our new home in Haslingden – the former Mary Hindle Centre.

Darren Horsnell has coordinated work to prepare the new centre and the ground

floor is now ready for occupation. New boilers have been installed and remedial works to the additional rooms will be finished off.

Art classes will now have a permanent home and Lanc-

ashire Care Trust will be running courses from the centre.

VIC has been fortunate to have had many items donated including furniture and members are looking forward to welcoming everyone in.



Swinging into action

WHEN the call came in, 'Can you shift it?' Bob 'the builder' Elliott was quick to reply, 'Yes we can!'

So began a hectic four days of dismantling a children's play area in Champness Hall in Rochdale.

High Level, a drug and alcohol service which operates in the Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale areas, asked VIC to assist in removing the equipment some of which was no longer health and safety compliant so not able to be used.

The building is going to become a community hall and the equipment needed to be moved to free up the space for development.

VIC manager Bob said: "We got a team of volunteers together led by outreach worker Steve Butterworth and they worked exceptionally hard to dismantle all the equipment and clear the building.

"A smaller play area is being created from the equipment that can be reused, which will be available for families who come to the centre.

"VIC will also be operating outreach from the centre in the future. It was a huge job and we agreed to help before we knew we were to get the centre in Haslingden.

"I think this will be a very rewarding partnership for VIC and High Level as we will be working closely together in the future while we extend our work in the Rochdale area."

In fine voice

VIC will be starting its own veterans' choir in January.

It will be led by volunteer admin assistant Peter Webster, who already sings with an Oldham choir, and will be open to veterans and their families.

Peter said: "Music is a good way to meet new people and a great way to get the veterans, families and their children all involved in a joint activity.

"The members don't have to be able to sing, or even have any musical background – though it would help.

"It is amazing the sound that is created when a group of people sing together."

For more information email peterwebster@veteransincommunities.org or call 0742 3326 844.

Service leavers

WE were invited to two special briefings about problems faced by service leavers.

The first, a JobCentre and Armed Forces study day at Kimberley Barracks in Preston, looked at what improvements can be made for service leavers.

VIC was invited to explain its role within the Third Sector in assisting veterans to find employment and helping to resettle ex-Forces personnel.

The second, at the Imperial War Museum in Manchester, was to hear the findings of a special report commissioned by 42 Brigade into issues faced by service leavers.

The investigation was carried out by Salford and Chester Universities and VIC was invited as a guest to hear the findings.

Suicide intervention

TWO more VIC members have been successfully trained in suicide intervention – ASIST.

Darren Horsnell and Steve Butterworth successfully completed the course. Manager Bob Elliott will now be undertaking a Suicide SafeTalk course.

The next ASIST course will be in January with another soon afterwards; community groups are welcome to book places. Two members of the Healthy Minds team and one from the Royal British Legion have been referred onto the course by VIC.

Art classes expand

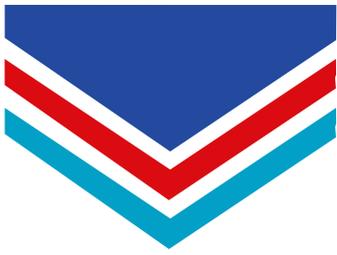
ART classes will be starting in Rochdale in January.

They will be held fortnightly on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at Heywood Sports Village. For more information email stevebutterworth@veteransincommunities.org

Building managers

A COURSE on how to manage a community building has been successfully completed by Peter Webster, Nick Byrnes and Julian Beirne.

The one-day course was organised by Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service.



Non-stop festive events for veterans

The VIC Christmas project is complete thanks to the wonderful support of many people and organisations.

Family Support Worker Suzanne Preston is co-ordinating activities and has enlisted the help of many VIC supporters.

Working with Military Veterans' Service, a whole series of activities have been

arranged throughout Christmas and New Year as this is known to be a difficult time for some veterans who can feel socially isolated if they are spending the festive season alone.

Rossendale Hospice has donated its minibus, Link4Life have provided two badminton courts, Hebron in Rochdale are giving VIC the opportunity to prepare and serve

Christmas Lunch to the homeless on Christmas Day, Harry Mills and Lancashire Veterans' Association have donated £100 and are providing lunch on Boxing Day with presents.

On Boxing Day there will also be a walk and refreshments. Rochdale Borough Council have offered meals to each of the veterans. VIC have provided funding for

refreshments and diesel for the minibus. On New Year's Eve, bowling is planned with participants contributing £10 each.

Finally, to round celebrations off, a final walk and refreshments is planned for New Year's Day

If anyone would like to attend any of the events email suzannepreston@veteransincommunities.org



Christmas cards painted by VIC sent by Mayor

ROSSENDALE's Mayor Councillor Amanda Robertson selected cards painted by VIC members to be sent as her official civic Christmas cards.

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell said: "I was delighted when the Mayor decided to send our cards as it is a great honour for VIC and for the individual members who have painted the pictures.

"Our art group continues to flourish and we are looking forward being in our new base."

2013 what a busy year

VIC is just over one year old and it is worth highlighting some of our achievements in the last 12 months

We gained charity status in March, only five months after VIC was established in Rossendale

We have been successful in securing funding from two CCGs, Clinical Commissioning Groups, East Lancashire and Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale (HMR)

VIC was granted Awards For All Lottery money for work being carried out in Rochdale.

Grant money was secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Whitworth Council for two projects commemorating the start of the First World War in Bacup and Whitworth.

We have been awarded some commissioning funding from the Armed Forces Community Covenant for our first veterans' centre in Haslingden.

A community centre in Haslingden was gifted to VIC as a permanent base for the charity's operations

We organised two success-

ful Veterans' Art Exhibitions, where work produced by veterans was displayed in Rossendale and Bury. Similar exhibitions are planned for 2014.



VIC has established strong working relationships across public, private and third sector organisations in Lancashire and parts of Greater Manchester.

Our members have attended and achieved a number of courses and are working towards others.

VIC has undertaken a range of outdoor activities

across Rossendale and Rochdale.

Outreach has been developed and extended across East Lancashire and Rochdale, and more outreach venues are planned for 2014

VIC has established a Family Support Group in Rossendale

We have employed our first outreach worker thanks to funding from The Poppy Factory.

VIC won the 'Not For Profit' category at the Rossendale Business Awards

We have supported countless individuals and families, and helped them to make positive changes to behaviours and lifestyles.

Manager Bob Elliott, *pictured*, said: "I think it is fair to say this has been an outstanding year for VIC, and exceeded all the expectations we had at the beginning of 2013.

"This could not have been achieved without the support of our members and the organisations we work with and we would like to say a very big thank you to everyone."

What's On and Where



FROM JANUARY 7 ROSSENDALE

VIC Outreach Service

MONDAY

11am-1pm

new venue

Former Mary Hindle Centre, 12 Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

WEDNESDAY

11am-3pm

new venue

Former Mary Hindle Centre, 12 Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

VIC Art Group and drop-in

FRIDAY

11am-3pm

new venue

Former Mary Hindle Centre, 12 Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

Walking Group

THURSDAY

Walks are arranged on the 2nd and 4th Thursday, weather permitting. Contact VIC on **01706 871730**.

VIC Family Support Group

FRIDAY

A support network that meet every week at 1pm at Asda, Rawtenstall. Contact Suzanne suzannepreston@veteransincommunities.org

FROM JANUARY 13 HEYWOOD

VIC Outreach Service and fortnightly Art Group

WEDNESDAY

11am-2.30pm

Badminton

3pm-4pm

Heywood Sports Village, West Starkey Street, Heywood, OL10 4TW.

Walks are held fortnightly on **Thursdays** combined with the Rossendale walking group.

From January fortnightly Art Group sessions will be held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at Heywood Sports Village.

Out of Outreach hours contact Steve Butterworth 07745 048 890.

FROM JANUARY 14 BURNLEY

VIC Outreach Service

TUESDAY

10am-2pm

Retreat 'n' Recover Centre, 21 Hammerton Street, Burnley, BB11 1NA.

Out of Outreach hours contact Peter Webster on 0786 4048 761

PCT Military Veterans Service

0161 253 6638

The Royal British Legion

08457 725 725

Rossendale Citizens' Advice Bureau

0844 499 4121 (from a landline)

0300 456 2552 (from a mobile)

The Samaritans

01706 830999

Mental Health Helpline

0500 639000

Monday to Friday 7pm - 11pm Saturday &

Sunday 12 Noon to 12 midnight

East Lancashire Single Point of Access via GP or self-referral

01282 657116

Contacts

VIC – 07961 554 006

Manager Bob Elliott

bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org

07961 554 006

Family Support Worker Suzanne Preston

suzannepreston@veteransincommunities.org

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org

Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

VIC supported by:

powered by

REAL LOTTERY FUNDED

NHS East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group

Rossendale alive BOROUGH COUNCIL

HYNDBURN The place to be an excellent council

Link4Life

THE Charity Service Registered Charity No: 1011293

LIVE AT-EASE Supporting ex-service personnel and their families

ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Borough of Pendle

ASDA NHS Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Clinical Commissioning Group

VIC update

THE New Year will be upon us shortly and our first resolution is to continue the expansion of VIC to ensure veterans and their families throughout East Lancashire and the Rochdale area feel they can truly return, belong and prosper within their own communities.

VIC is excited to be moving into our own permanent home in Haslingden but we will continue to offer outreach across Rossendale in different venues and will be setting up sessions within Bacup Library - details in the next newsletter.

We are also finalising arrangements for outreach services to open in Pendle and Blackburn in the New Year.

We would like to thank all of our supporters who have made 2013 such a fantastic success for VIC.

It is with sadness that our project co-ordinator Andrea Goodall has left her post this month but we would like to thank her for helping VIC move forward with our aims.

Andrea has done a sterling job helping VIC to forge partnerships across East Lancashire and the Rochdale area and secured thousands of pounds of grants to ensure our projects can go forward into 2014.

It promises to be an exceptionally busy year for the charity, not least with the opening of our centre in Haslingden.

May we wish you a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year.

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/VICVeteransInCommunities